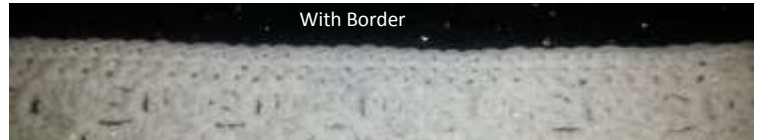




Tip of the Month – Adding Borders to Crocheted Work



Adding the finishing touches to a project – such as a blanket, dishcloth, or neckline – often involves adding a border around the edge. Your item generally looks unfinished without them. While many projects often have the border in the pattern, there are some that do not, or the instructions are not entirely clear as to what to do. This tip will help make it easier to add those finishing touches.



I suggest always start with a row of double crochet all the way around, regardless of what the border pattern actually is. The double crochet is the smallest stitch and can therefore be 'inconspicuous' (if done in the right colour). This stitch helps to clean up the edges and helps hide 'minor' imperfections at the end of rows, before adding the decorative pattern.

Begin your border pattern somewhere along the top – not in the corner. I usually start mine approx. 10 stitches away from the corner. This will help to blend in the join when you are finishing.

Working along the top and bottom of your project is easy, in that you work in the top (or bottom) of each stitch. When you work down the sides, however, or around necklines – being the ends of the rows – there are no stitches to work into. Many patterns will say '...work xx stitches evenly across'. This doesn't mean a stitch for every row, as the width of most stitches differs to their length. For example, 1 stitch per row if going around a pattern using double crochet can result in a ruffled edge, while 1 stitch per row if going around a pattern using treble crochet can result in pulling your project too tight.



If the pattern asks for xxx number of stitches to be distributed evenly between two points, I find it easier to divide that edge into smaller sections using stitch markers – as small a

section to allow me to visually see that my stitches are evenly spaced.

For example – if I have a project where I need to make 80 stitches evenly between the corners, I will fold my project in half and use a stitch marker to mark halfway. I then fold each half in half again to mark the quarters, and then the quarters in half again to mark further sections. The smallest section then will need to have $(80/8)$ 10 stitches.

What if the pattern doesn't give a number? A little more work is required first to work out how many stitches you need. This is achieved by making a gauge swatch and working out how many stitches per inch/5 cm you have then calculate how many stitches you need for the length you have. After a while your experience will convert to number of stitches per row. For example, I know from my past work that for a pattern using trebles, I get six double crochets across four rows.